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SUBJECT: MOROCCO: 2008 ANNUAL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT

REFS: 08 STATE 002731

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11. (U) This cable responds to action request (reftel) for updated information on the Moroccan government's efforts to combat trafficking in persons from April 2007 to March 2008.

Morocco Headed in the Right Direction

12. (SBU) Over the past year, the GOM continued to prioritize its law enforcement activities intended to investigate, prosecute, and deter what the GOM describes as "human-trafficking rings." In 2007, Morocco continued its strategy to fight trafficking based on five major pillars: security measures, legislation, the creation of institutions specializing in fighting illegal migration, international cooperation, and public awareness campaigns. It should be underlined, however, that the GOM makes no distinction between migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The GOM understood both activities as illegal and exploitative, which often result in

the abuse and even the demise of Moroccans and third country nationals who seek to emigrate clandestinely. With GOM encouragement, Moroccan civil society was increasingly and visibly active on TIP issues.

¶3. (SBU) Morocco's geographic position as a natural conduit for sub-Saharan trafficking continued to be addressed by Morocco and the European Union (EU). Despite efforts made by both Spain and Morocco to stem trafficking and illegal migration in the past few years, the problem persisted. Throughout the year, the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to stemming the flow of illegal migrants across the border in the north, as well as in the waterways between Morocco and the Canary Islands. In addition, in August 2007, Spain and Morocco signed an accord to prevent illegal migration of minors, guarantee them protection and facilitate their repatriation. Morocco also signed a 1.3 million euro agreement with Catalonia to prevent illegal migration of minors. The GOM signed a similar, 2.0 million euro agreement with Italy. Morocco continued to work closely with the Spanish Government on resolving the issue of the approximately 6,000 Moroccan minors living illegally in Spain. The Spanish Government will not repatriate minors until it is certain the young Moroccans have a safe and healthy environment available to them in Morocco. Moreover, agreement is needed from the parents or guardians for the return, which is often difficult to acquire.

¶4. (SBU) Moroccan officials continued to assert that the POLISARIO orchestrated the illicit transfer of migrants through the Western Sahara and northern Mauritania to the Canary Islands. UN officials in the Western Sahara, however, claimed they saw no evidence of POLISARIO involvement in migrant smuggling in any organized or sanctioned way.

¶5. (U) PARA 27: Overview of Morocco's activities to combat

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trafficking in persons.

-- 27/A. Morocco is a country of origin and destination for domestic trafficking, generally involving young rural children recruited to work as child maids or laborers in urban areas. It is also a popular country of transit for internationally trafficked men, women, and children. It is a country of origin for men, women, and minors trafficked to European countries and the Middle East. According to the GOM, international organizations, and numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the number of Moroccan minors being trafficked and smuggled into Spain, Italy, and other European countries increased in 2007. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) worked with the Governments of Morocco and Italy, and Moroccan NGOs to stop the trafficking of minors. The first phase of this cooperative plan, completed in 2007, was a survey to measure the magnitude of the problem. The survey identified the most vulnerable persons, pinpointed the regions from which persons are trafficked, and proposed the most effective methods of prevention. As a result of the study, the GOM and GOI, along with the IOM, began work in on the SALAM (Solidarity with children of Morocco) project in March 2008. The project will continue until September 2009. IOM chose the town of Khouribga to begin the project after it found it to be the second largest city of origin for unaccompanied Moroccan minors in Italy, following only Casablanca.

-- In addition, the IOM, UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, and UNIFEM began a four-month study in February 2008, to evaluate the extent of trafficking versus smuggling in Morocco. An assessment committee, to include one GOM official, will be formed at the end of the study to evaluate the results and make recommendations to address the issue. This will be the first comprehensive study on trafficking in Morocco, as well as the first time the GOM will have acknowledged the difference between smuggling and trafficking in persons. UNICEF expects to release the results of the study in the summer of 2008.

-- According to a spokesman from the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), the number of illegal migration attempts from Morocco to Europe fell in 2007. The officials claimed that Morocco successfully and humanely repatriated over 1,200 illegal sub-Saharan migrants in

12007. The MOI representatives also stated that more than 260 trafficking networks were dismantled in 2007.

-- Both Moroccan boys and girls were at risk of being trafficked for labor. Young girls were trafficked from the countryside to work as domestic laborers in larger cities. Boys were farmed out as "apprentices" in the artisanal sector, construction field or in mechanic shops where they worked carrying supplies and performed menial tasks.

-- Sub-Saharan women, who often originated as voluntary migrants, were forced into prostitution to pay off debts to smugglers. Some

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were held captive and forced into prostitution. Moroccan women were lured to Saudi Arabia, Syria, Cyprus, and the Gulf as domestic workers and forced, upon arrival, to work in bars and brothels. The Mission has first hand as well as media and anecdotal information regarding trafficking of Moroccan women to Syria.

-- 27/B. Domestic trafficking in Morocco has historically involved three vulnerable groups as victims: (a) girls sent involuntarily to serve as child maids, (b) young boys sent to work as apprentices, and (c) women forced to perform sexual services. There have been several instances where Moroccan women were unknowingly trafficked abroad to become sex workers after being promised jobs as domestics.

It appears that the majority of the girls and young women pressed into domestic servitude and sexual tourism are from rural villages in the Middle and High Atlas Mountains. However, according to some NGOs this phenomenon may have begun to change as more girls may recently have been trafficked from poor urban areas. Human rights advocates charged that "intermediaries" approach poor parents promising that their children will have a chance at a better life as child maids or as apprentices where they will learn a trade and earn money for the family.

-- Sub-Saharan Africans transiting Morocco, destined for Europe, also fell victim to traffickers. According to Pastor David Brown of the French Anglican Church, who provided humanitarian assistance to sub-Saharan clandestine migrants, "handlers" pressured the majority of female migrants into prostitution and involuntary servitude to pay for food and shelter. These claims were reinforced by officials at UNHCR in Rabat, as well as officials at IOM, who worked directly with sub-Saharan migrants.

-- As a country of origin, Morocco's rural and urban poor were a ready pool for traffickers and migrant smugglers, who promised a better life to their recruits. According to UNICEF and local NGO social welfare advocates, traffickers or "intermediaries" worked mainly in isolated rural villages in the Atlas Mountains where they persuaded desperate parents that their children would be better off as apprentices or child maids. In some instances, these youngsters and teenagers ended up as sex workers in popular Moroccan tourist destinations, namely Marrakech, Agadir, and Tangier.

-- Political will existed at the highest levels to combat trafficking in persons. Morocco recognized its problem with trafficking as a transit country and country of origin. The GOM has asked both the U.S. and the EU for assistance with border challenges and repatriation issues. Morocco continued to participate in regional and international conferences focusing on how to counter trafficking and smuggling. Morocco fully supported civil society's efforts to fight human trafficking and smuggling.

-- 27/C. The Prime Minister's Secretariat for Migration Affairs served as the coordinating office for agencies concerned with

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migration and illegal immigration. Anti-trafficking activities were primarily carried out by the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), although it involved different entities falling under it: clandestine immigration is the purview of immigration officials; prostitution falls under the police; while child brides are under

the purview of local authorities who ultimately report to the MOI. Three departments were chiefly responsible for child labor issues: the Ministry of Employment and Professional Training, the Secretariat for Families, Children, and the Handicapped, and the

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Ministry of National Education, specifically its Department of Non-Formal Education, which tried to provide remedial education and job training to child maids and "apprentices." Prosecution of individuals charged with trafficking or violation of labor laws fell to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

-- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) was also an integral part of the system and had a two pronged system to deal with migration and trafficking. One department worked on Moroccan policy issues dealing with international migration while the other coordinated closely with international organizations represented domestically, such as UNHCR, IOM, UNICEF and others who dealt directly with migrants.

-- 27/D. While the GOM continued its efforts to fight trafficking, the cost was a hardship. The GOM continuously requested help from the EU and individual countries. While funding to assist with border security was promised to Morocco by the EU, according to officials at the MFA, only a small portion was delivered. Corruption in general was a problem; however, it did not appear to have a serious impact on trafficking.

-- 27/E. The GOM did not differentiate between trafficking and illegal migration; therefore, it did not monitor for evidence of trafficking specifically. According to MFA officials, Morocco continues to heavily guard its northeast border with Algeria and its far southwest Atlantic border, including the disputed Western Sahara territory, facing the Canary Islands to interdict trafficking and migrant smuggling. It also stepped up enforcement at airports, train stations, and shipping ports. The GOM had a substantial and well-organized immigration, customs, and security apparatus that closely monitored the country's borders. Border patrol officers routinely found clandestine migrants hidden in trucks and freighters destined for Spain.

-- Some statistics were made public through the MOI. These frequently included the number of people arrested, trafficking gangs dismantled, and the number of prevented incidents of illegal migration.

16. (U) PARA 28: Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

-- No new legislation regarding trafficking has been enacted since the last TIP report. The GOM officially did not differentiate

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between smuggling and trafficking.

-- 28/A. On November 20, 2003, Morocco's new Immigration and Emigration Act 02-03, entitled "Entry and Stay of Foreigners in the Kingdom of Morocco, Illegal Emigration and Immigration," was published in the Official Bulletin. Under Title II, Articles 50-56, the law prohibits trafficking in persons and sets specific punishments. It severely punishes people involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking, including public officials who take a hear-no-evil and see-no-evil approach to violations of Moroccan immigration law. Title II makes it abundantly clear that all individuals and their accomplices involved in human trafficking face high fines and prison sentences. Asset forfeiture is also established, and the courts are given extra-territorial judicial powers to rule on violations of Moroccan law, which take place outside Morocco. Moroccan immigration law holds public officials accountable. The act criminalizes acts not only carried out by the operatives, but also by those who provide safe haven to smuggled persons and punishes security officers who fail to carry out their duties. The law is especially harsh on public officials who are caught promoting illegal emigration and/or migration.

-- Article 50 stipulates a fine of 3,000 to 10,000 dirhams (USD 390-1,297) and/or one to six months imprisonment, aside from any

punishments under the Penal Code, be assessed against any person attempting to enter and/or exit Moroccan territory by land, sea, or air by presenting a fraudulent travel document(s) or by traveling under an assumed name or by using falsified documents. It also prohibits attempted entry/departure from points other than recognized border crossings and designated points of departure.

-- Article 51 provides that a prison sentence of two to five years and a fine of 50,000 to 500,000 dirhams (USD 6,486-64,864) be levied against any public official (whether in charge of or a member of the "public forces"), travel agent, or transportation personnel operating carriers by land, water, and/or air who attempts to facilitate the illegal entry or exit of a person.

-- Article 52 dictates a prison sentence of six months to three years and a fine of 50,000 to 500,000 dirhams (USD 6,486-64,864) shall be assessed against anyone found to have facilitated, organized, or participated in the illegal entry or exit of Moroccans and/or foreign nationals in a manner detailed in Articles 50-51 and whether or not payment was made for his/her services.

-- Article 52 also specifies increased penalties of 10 to 15 years in prison and a fine of 500,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams (USD 64,864-129,727) be levied against individuals who are repeat offenders and are discovered to have been habitually involved in human smuggling.

-- Penalties of 10 to 15 years imprisonment and fines of 500,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams (USD 64,864-129,727) are to be assessed against

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individual members of any association or cartel created for the express purpose of migrant smuggling. Leaders of these associations are also subject to the penalties prescribed in Article 294, Paragraph 2, of the Penal Code.

-- Moreover, Article 52 inflicts even greater punishments of 15 to 20 years in prison should the would-be emigrant or immigrant suffer serious injury and "permanent incapacity" is the result. If the migrant is killed while being transported, the trafficker is subject to life imprisonment.

-- Should convictions be handed down, Article 53 grants the courts the right to confiscate the means of transport, whether public, private, or rental, used to commit violations of the law. Transportation assets of trafficking ring members and their accomplices may also be seized, whether or not they participated in the operation.

-- Article 54 orders that a fine of 10,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams (USD 1,297-129,727) be assessed against any corporate entity found guilty of immigration infractions as specified above. Corporate entities are also subject to confiscation orders.

-- Article 55 requires that judgments be made public in three daily newspapers, which cover the jurisdiction where the case was heard.

-- Finally, Article 56 establishes that the Moroccan courts may hear cases brought against foreigners accused of violating Moroccan immigration law. The courts are given extra-territorial jurisdiction in Article 56, which says they may rule on infractions of Moroccan law, which occur outside Morocco's borders and are committed by non-Moroccans.

-- 28/B. Penalties under articles 497-504 and 540-549 for traffickers deceiving, defrauding, or coercing individuals are from six months to five years' imprisonment and fines of 200 dirhams to 5,000 dirhams (USD 26-648), depending upon whether minors have been corrupted.

-- 28/C. Morocco does not have a law specifically forbidding labor trafficking. Moroccan law, however, does forbid clandestine labor. The violation carries a fine of between 2,000-5,000 dirhams (USD 259-648). In the case of employing children less than 15 years of age, the fine is increased to 25,000-30,000 dirhams (USD 2,343-3,892). The Moroccan penal code imposes a fine of

5,000-20,000 dirhams (USD 648-2,594), and between one and three years in prison for anyone convicted of facilitating or encouraging forced child labor. Forced labor is defined by the penal code as any illegal work or any work harmful to a child's health, security or morals.

-- 28/D. The penalty for rape or forcible sexual assault is dependent upon the involvement of minors and whether the act was

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deemed violent. Rapists can be imprisoned for 5-10 years (article 486). Sexual offenses against minors, not involving violence (i.e., intercourse not deemed rape), are punishable by five to ten years imprisonment (article 484). Perpetrators of similar acts with violence (rape) face 10-20 years in prison (article 485); if this results in victim's loss of virginity, the offender faces 20-30 years in jail (article 488). Actual sentences handed down may be less or more severe depending on whether it is a first offense or attenuating circumstances existed.

-- 28/E. While prostitution and solicitation of prostitutes was illegal, local law enforcement often closed its eyes to the problem. Activities of brothel owners/operators, criminals, pimps and enforcers were criminalized; enforcement, however, was sporadic at best. Prostitution was commonplace in large cities like Casablanca, Marrakech, Fez, Tangier and Agadir, but also posed a problem in smaller cities and in rural areas as well. The Government prosecuted cases against individuals who coerced or forced women into performing sexual services.

-- 28/F. According to MOI reports, the Government claimed to have broken up more than 260 trafficking/smuggling rings in 2007.

-- 28/G. Law enforcement officers often participated in training and seminars that covered trafficking when these programs were offered by other countries. In July 2007, 25-30 officials from a variety of ministries attended Counter-trafficking training provided by the IOM through the MFA's Center for Migrants Rights. In addition to the officials, 25-30 NGO leaders dealing with migrants participated in the training. In winter 2007, the GOM approached the IOM with a request to provide the MFA with assistance on developing a set of "best practices" for fighting sex tourism. The request was made to assist an inter-ministry working group with the development of an Action Plan to Fight Sex Tourism.

-- 28/H. Morocco was party to several bilateral and multilateral conventions on judicial cooperation and extradition of criminals with European, Arab, Asian, and African countries, as well as the United States.

-- 28/I. The GOM did not extradite individuals charged with trafficking, although government officials note that Morocco does have bilateral extradition treaties with relevant countries. Morocco did not extradite its nationals in accordance with Article 721 of the Penal Code. The GOM has no plans to modify the law.

-- 28/J. There was no evidence of national government involvement or tolerance for trafficking. On a local level, however, there were rumors that public servants acting on their own sought pay-offs or bribes to look the other way in some cases of migrant smuggling and trafficking. The Government attempted to crack down on corruption within the public sector.

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-- 28/K. The GOM prosecuted to the full extent of the law its own officials, as it does other individuals, involved in trafficking.

-- 28/L. In July 2007, Moroccan troops, posted in the Cote d'Ivoire on a UN Peacekeeping mission, were accused of the sexual abuse of Ivoirian women and girls. The GOM fully supported the investigation of the troops. A joint UN - Moroccan investigative committee was established in August 2007 to investigate the incident. The allegations were dropped when none of the alleged victims would

appear before the committee. The African Press Agency reported in August 2007, that a UN document claimed that 13 of the Ivoirian girls confessed to having been manipulated by an NGO into accusing the Moroccan soldiers of sexual abuse in exchange for food and assistance.

-- 28/M. Morocco had a problem with sex tourism. The phenomenon was identified by the GOM as a growing problem. An Irish national was sentenced to one year in prison and a fine of USD 1,300, in August 2007, for sexually abusing two minor children less than 16 years of age. The verdict was overturned in November 2007 by the Court of Appeal of Agadir, and the Irish national was released. In February 2008, a Spanish national was convicted of pedophilia and sentenced to a four-year prison term. His Moroccan accomplice was sentenced to 10 months. The Spaniard was also ordered to return the monies he collected from the victims in exchange for promises to help them immigrate to Spain. Also in February, four Arab tourists from the Gulf were arrested along with four prostitutes, one of whom was a minor, and their pimp. The group was being held pending trial.

17. (U) PARA 29: Protection and Assistance to Victims

-- 29/A. The GOM did not provide assistance to foreign victims of trafficking by way of providing temporary or permanent residency status or other relief from deportation.

-- 29/B. Morocco's Center for Migrant Rights provided counseling services, including an explanation of one's legal and civil rights, to Moroccan migrants; however, legal representation was not offered, nor was shelter, medical or psychological services. The GOM relies on the NGO community to provide most services to victims of trafficking.

-- Child maids who have fled abusive employers or women forced into prostitution that have fled the abusive situation, relied solely on the Moroccan and international NGO community. In some cases foreign victims of trafficking were able to seek assistance from the NGO community. At least one Christian NGO catered solely to the migrant community and offered medical and financial support to victims of trafficking.

--29/C. The GOM provided modest funds to national NGOs offering shelter and services to victims of domestic trafficking. In

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addition, it offered teachers and social workers to support national NGOs working with child maids. At the Ministry of Labor, it provided offices to the International Labor Organization (ILO)'s International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), which worked on the child maid problem. The GOM allowed authorized NGOs to solicit tax-free donations from citizens, residents, and companies, indirectly assisting these non-profit elements of civil society to provide services to trafficking victims.

-- 29/D. The GOM did not differentiate between victims of trafficking and voluntarily smuggled migrants; therefore, there was no data on the number of trafficking victims.

-- 29/E. Prostitution was not legal in Morocco.

-- 29/F. Morocco did not differentiate between victims of trafficking and smuggled migrants. Foreign trafficking victims were treated as illegal migrants. They were often arrested and deported along with other migrants. Morocco routinely rounded up illegal sub-Saharan migrants and victims of trafficking and left them at the Algerian border, often without food or water. There were first hand reports from Refugees Without Borders (MSF) of abuse of both migrants and trafficked persons at the hands of Moroccan police and gangs of sub-Saharans in the frontier area between Morocco and Algeria.

-- For domestic victims of trafficking, in 2003 Parliament changed the Penal Code so that runaway child maids may be administratively returned to their families instead of being arrested for vagrancy. If returning them to their parents was not possible or feasible,

they would be placed in separate youth centers, not mixed in with juvenile delinquents.

-- Morocco's November 2003 Immigration and Emigration Act carefully defined the rights of illegal immigrants, economic migrants, and asylum seekers in Title II, Article 38. This article also pinpointed the prerogatives immigration officials have in protecting Morocco's borders. The statute (and the way the law was implemented) blurred the distinction between trafficked persons and economic migrants. It set forth limits to how long a non-Moroccan may be detained and under what conditions. The law furthermore listed the rights to which an intending immigrant, non-resident alien, casual visitor, or trafficked person was entitled.

-- 29/G. While victims were not encouraged to file civil suits against traffickers, they often testified on behalf of the GOM when it sought to prosecute trafficking cases. Specific numbers of victims who testified were not available.

-- 29/H. We are unaware of any specific protections, other than laws forbidding the various forms of trafficking, that the Government provided to victims of trafficking or witnesses in cases against traffickers.

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-- 29/I. Morocco offers some specialized training for government officials in dealing with victims of trafficking. With the assistance of IOM, the Government trained diplomats in countries that are prime destinations or transit countries, i.e., Spain, Italy and the Gulf region, for Moroccan victims of trafficking. Statistics on the number of those assisted and exact type of assistance were not available.

-- GOM officials from a variety of ministries including Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; Health; National Education; and Social Development, Families and Solidarity attended workshops on trafficking provided by the IOM in 2007.

-- 29/J. Morocco worked with NGOs and the international community, specifically Spain, Italy and the IOM, to establish shelters and a system to assist Moroccan minors who have been the victims of trafficking abroad. In 2007, very few minors were repatriated according to Ambassador Jaouad El Himdi, MFA Director of Consular and Social Affairs. El Himdi claimed that for repatriation, Moroccan family approval was needed and very rarely granted.

-- 29/K. Victims of trafficking in Morocco were assisted by local NGOs. In addition, some international organizations assisting victims of trafficking were; the IOM, Medecins sans Frontieres(MSF), and several Christian charitable organizations in Rabat and Casablanca. IOM repatriated 577 irregular migrants in the first six months of 2007, with financial assistance from the Government of Switzerland. MSF assisted irregular migrants with medical problems in northern Morocco. We are not aware of any GOM funding for these two organizations. Several Christian organizations assisted irregular migrants and victims of trafficking with medical, financial, and psychological help. Some assisted the migrants by finding lodging and setting up micro-enterprises. Private charitable donations funded these programs.

-- The GOM had a large budget to fight illegal migration. However, since it did not differentiate between trafficking and smuggling, there were no funds earmarked to assist trafficking victims. In addition, the GOM claimed it had inadequate funds to deal with the problem of clandestine migrants or victims of trafficking.

-- The GOM worked very closely with international organizations and NGOs on internal trafficking, especially in the child labor sector. In January 2007, the GOM launched a National Plan of Action for Child to End Child Labor developed in cooperation with UNICEF, IPEC, and ADROS, the USDOL funded child rescue project. The first phase of the project, the awareness campaign, lasted from January 22 to February 23, 2007 and used print media, radio and television to disseminate information about the dangers of child labor. Phase two, completed in March 2007, encompassed the signing of five

conventions or compacts between the Ministry of Social Development, Families and Solidarity and various partners in preparation of the

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implementation of phase three of the plan.

-- The first compact, with the King's National Initiative for Human Development (INDH), will integrate the INDH goal of attacking poverty in Morocco with the elimination of child domestics by providing assistance and education to families who find it necessary to allow daughters to work as domestics in order to supplement the family income.

-- The Secretariat of State for Literacy and Non-Formal Education agreed, in compact two, to continue the awareness campaign begun in early 2007, educating Moroccans on the dangers of employing or working as a child domestic. In addition, the Secretariat pledged to increase non-formal education programs targeted at former child maids with the goal of reintegrating them into the formal education system.

-- The third compact, concluded with the National Observatory for the Rights of Children (ONDE), will mobilize different partners, governmental and non-governmental, to conduct programs warning against the employment of child maids. The ONDE will also continue to work on programs to assist child victims of abuse through legal and financial support, call centers, and programs for the protection of child maids.

-- Twenty million dirham (USD 2.6 million) was committed for further implementation of the Plan of Action by the Moroccan Agency for Social Development in the fourth compact. This money will be used to develop the capacities of families to help them create income generating projects to supplement a meager income instead of placing their children in the labor market.

-- The final compact was signed with Zakoura Foundation, Morocco's largest micro-credit NGO. The Foundation agreed to prioritize loans for families who allow their children to be withdrawn from the labor market and reintegrated into the educational system on a permanent basis.

-- The third and final phase of the Plan, which will continue until 2015, initiated the process of implementing the agreements noted above. The project is underway in Greater Casablanca, concentrating in the regions of Doukkala-Abda and Chaouia-Ouerdigha, Marrakech focusing on the regions of Tansift-El Haouz, Rabat targeting the regions of Rabat-Sale and Zemmour-Zaer, Fez and Fez-Boulemane, Taza, Taounate and Errachidia, all areas known to be struggling with high percentages of the worst forms of child labor.

-- Domestic NGOs also received some support from the GOM, most often as in kind donations. The work of these NGOs includes: publicizing and monitoring the child maid problem; providing remedial education, vocational training, health care, and recreational opportunities to child maids; rehabilitating and educating street children, delinquents and runaways; assisting single mothers to become

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financially independent; educating youth and prostitutes (male and female) about the dangers of unprotected sex; and advocating for women's and children's rights.

18. (U) PARA 30: Prevention

-- 30/A. The GOM did not differentiate between trafficking and irregular migration. However, the GOM did acknowledge that child labor and irregular migration were problems.

-- 30/B. From January 22 to February 23 2007, the GOM ran an anti-child labor awareness campaign to inform and educate the citizens of Morocco. The campaign included brochures, billboards, advertisements on buses, and radio spots. The objective was to inform the people of Morocco about the dangers and legal

ramifications of employing child maids. The campaign was very effective and reached millions of Moroccan citizens. This campaign targeted both the potential victims of domestic trafficking and the demand by denouncing the practice of hiring child maids.

-- 30/C. The GOM worked very closely with NGOs dealing with domestic trafficking. The GOM continued to work with the IOM and UNHCR on migration issues. In July 2007, the GOM signed an agreement with UNHCR allowing the UN organization to have full diplomatic representation in Morocco.

-- 30/D. The GOM monitored immigration and emigration patterns concerning illegal migration. Law enforcement agencies did not screen for potential trafficking victims along Morocco's borders.

-- 30/E. In November 2003, in response to a royal edict issued by King Mohammed VI, the GOM established an overarching agency for migration matters, the National Agency for Migration and Border Surveillance. This agency reports to both the Palace and the MOI. Within the MOI, the Director General of Internal Affairs, Director of International Cooperation, and Chief of Immigration are responsible for directing policy. Within the Office of the Prime Minister, there is a secretariat for migration matters. Other responsible parties include the police; gendarmes; and MOI border patrol; the army and navy; the Ministry of Social Development, Family, and Solidarity; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of National Education; the Minister Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Consular and Social Affairs Office; and the Customs Service.

-- On a routine basis, officials of the Labor Ministry, which has an Office of Children's Affairs dedicated to reducing child labor, met with ILO-IPEC and UNICEF representatives to harmonize policy and establish programs designed to combat child labor and the exploitation of children, notably those working as child maids, junior artisans or apprentices.

-- 30/F. In 2003, the GOM completed its national action plan to

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combat trafficking in persons. The following were and continue to be involved in developing anti-trafficking (smuggling) policies and programs: The Minister Delegate in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad, Office of the Chief of Migration and Immigration Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Director of International Cooperation, Ministry of Interior, and Chief of Immigration, Ministry of Interior.

-- In spring 2007, the same ministries involved in the anti-trafficking (smuggling) working group, with the addition of the Ministries of Tourism and Justice began to discuss an Anti-Sex Tourism Plan of Action. According to MFA, and MOJ officials the Plan of Action was still being developed. The working group requested assistance in the form of "best practices" from the IOM.

-- 30/G. In August 2007, the GOM voluntarily assisted in the investigation of Moroccan peacekeeping troops, accused of sexual abuse, in the Cote d'Ivoire. Several high ranking Moroccan military officials served with members of the UN on an investigative panel in Cote d'Ivoire in July and August 2007, after the allegations surfaced. Following the investigation, charges were dropped when no witnesses stepped forward.

-- 30/H. Not Applicable.

-- 30/I. Morocco very closely followed the activities of its peacekeeping troops. The recent case, noted above, demonstrates Morocco's dedication to safe peacekeeping efforts. In 2005, Moroccan troops were accused of sexual assault of women and children in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Following an investigation by the UN and Moroccan official, the GOM arrested, prosecuted and sentenced those involved. Morocco uses this example as part of its pre-deployment message to those troops on peacekeeping missions to demonstrate its "zero tolerance" standard.

¶10. (U) TIP Heroes: Mission Morocco would like to nominate American citizens Pastor David Brown and Julie Brown of the French Anglican Church. For the past two and a half years, Pastor and Mrs. Brown have been working tirelessly to assist sub-Saharan trafficking victims and clandestine migrants in Morocco, often at great personal risk. The Browns' church is one of the few places where trafficking victims can turn for help in Morocco as the GOM does not offer assistance to these individuals. The Browns welcome 150-200 new cases each month in Casablanca and Rabat, 25 percent of whom are women. Upon initial contact, Pastor Brown listens to the victims' stories, assesses their cases and develops a plan of action for assistance. The Browns help may come in the form of money, emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling, start-up assistance for micro-enterprises and/or medical help. Mrs. Brown, a certified nurse, examines each and every new arrival and offers free medical assistance to anyone who arrives at the church. While all the Browns' cases are not trafficking victims, Pastor Brown believes

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that 90 percent of the women that visit his office are victims, most of whom have been forced into prostitution and many of whom have been gang raped either on the journey to Morocco or in the country. The assistance offered by the Browns has helped many women escape those dangerous situations and start a safer, more independent life. The Browns are truly the unsung heroes of trafficking victims in Morocco.

¶10. (U) Mission POC on TIP issues is Amy M. Wilson, Labor/Political Officer, ConGen Casablanca, tel. 212-22-26-45-50, ext. 4151; fax 212-22-20-80-96; mail: PSC 74, Box 24, APO, AE 09718; pouch: 6280 Casablanca Place, Washington, DC 20521-6280; e-mail: WilsonAM@state.gov.

¶11. Embassy Rabat cleared this message.

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